

***Proverbs 12:25 - Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad.***

We live in a world that gives us plenty of reason and opportunity to be anxious. The broken, dark, unstable, fragile, world we live in offers a buffet of choices to be anxious about. Our lives can very quickly become weighed down by anxiety. But this verse gives us some hope. There's a good word that can make our hearts glad. I think this is telling us that there is a word we can hear that will relieve us of anxiety and worry and fear. A word that will restore joy and peace to our hearts. I know that the last thing you need is for me to come up with what I think is a good word. Instead, I want to give you a good word that comes straight from the Word of God.

***"Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7 ESV***

How do you cast your cares? Do you simply tell God you're giving up your worries? While I do think that is part of it, I think there is more to it.

Suppose you lived in a village with about 50 people and no army, no fortress, and suppose you heard that an enemy army of five-thousand-armed soldiers was coming against you to take your village and destroy its inhabitants. Now, that would be in your heart a burden. It would be an anxiety, and the kind of thing Peter says in 1 Peter 5:7 should be cast on the Lord, right? And suppose that there was a king, with an army of 500 thousand soldiers, who had pledged himself to protect you and your village when you call him for help. So, you send a messenger to the king and plead with him to come and protect you against the enemy, and he sends a royal messenger back with a message with the official king's seal on it that says, "I will protect you. The enemy will not overwhelm you." Signed, "The King."

Now, what would it mean or look like for you at that moment to cast your burden, to cast your anxieties, onto the king and have them relieved? Surely, the answer is this: to the degree that you trust the king's promise to protect you, to that degree, your burden will be lifted. If your trust is small, you will still feel burdened, but if your trust is great, your burden will be light.

So, the key to casting your burdens, your anxieties, onto the king is to trust the word of the king, the word of promise, which, of course, includes trusting that he has the power to do what he says he'll do, that he has the wisdom to be as strategic as he needs to be, that he has the will, or the desire, or the commitment to do what he says. Trust is the key to letting your burden go, putting your burden on the king.

### **What Kind of God?**

When it comes to casting our anxieties onto God, the most fundamental thing is what kind of God is He? Can I trust Him? Do I trust Him? What kind of God is God? Is He sufficient to take my burdens or does He have burdens of His own? Does He have what I need to relieve my burdens, to ease my anxiety, to meet my needs? Does He have any desire to help me with my cares, worries, anxieties, and fears? That has to be settled, and God must tell us and show us what kind of God He is.

### **He is Always the Giver**

***"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything." (Acts 17:24-25 ESV)*** In other words, God has no needs at all, God is not anxious about anything. He doesn't need our help. On the contrary, He

shows His divine fullness, wisdom, power, love by giving, not getting. The God we are called to cast our anxieties on is a giving God, always the giver.

### He is Looking to Give Strong Support

***“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars.” (2 Chronicles 16:9 ESV)*** God is looking for people who He can give strong support to. Maybe you see the qualifications and think you are disqualified; “my heart is not blameless.” But if we read the context, we see that what this blameless heart is has to do with a heart that is relying on God, loyal to God’s help, not self-sufficient. ***“At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, “Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the Lord your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you. Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the Lord, he gave them into your hand.” (2 Chronicles 16:7-8)*** What that really says is that God is on the lookout for people who let Him work for them, for people whose hearts will turn to Him and trust Him to be strong on their behalf. God is looking for ways, so to speak, to show off His power for us, not against us, for the sake of those who humble themselves under His mighty hand and trust Him to work for them.

### He Rejoices in Doing Good

***“I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.” (Jeremiah 32:40-41 ESV)*** Not just does you good. Not just is committed to doing you good, glorious as that is. But that He rejoices to do you good. “I will rejoice in doing them good.” He doesn’t begrudgingly fulfill the promise in Romans 8:28 to work everything together for our good. It is His joy to do you good. And not just sometimes. Always! “I will not turn away from doing good to them.” There are no lapses in His commitment or in His joy in doing good to His children, to those who trust Him and rely on Him.

### Jesus Came to Serve

***“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45 ESV)*** We see here what God was up to when He sent Jesus. In other words, at the very peak of the revelation of who God is, namely, in the incarnation of His own Son, the point He makes again is this: “I’m not coming to recruit help. I’m not coming to be served. I’m coming to serve. I’m the Savior here. I’m the helper here. I’m the rescuer here. I’m the provider here. I’m the all-wise guide here. I’m the treasure here. Don’t switch roles with me. Be needy, be satisfied, be trustful.”

### The Logic of Heaven

***“He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?” (Romans 8:32 ESV)*** If God is willing to give the greatest, most precious, most valuable possession He has, namely His Son Jesus, then certainly He is willing to graciously give us all things we need.

### Trust the All-Sufficient God

So, with this reality of the kind of God that we are dealing with, what it means to cast your burden or your anxiety on the Lord is that you trust Him, you listen to His promises concerning your situation, and you trust Him that He is the kind of God who is strong enough, wise enough, good enough to take onto His strong shoulders your concern and fulfill His promise to you. Therefore, the casting of our anxieties means trusting His sufficiency, trusting His strength, trusting His faithfulness, and trusting He knows your situation, trusting He delights to do you good.

But sometimes it is hard to be joyful and full of peace. Our situation is so hard to bear that we just can't muster any joy. When that happens try to imitate Abraham: ***"In hope he believed against hope" (Romans 4:18)***. In other words, you look your hopeless situation in the face and say, "You are not as strong as God. He can do the impossible. And I know He loves to do it for those who trust Him. So, hopelessness, you will not have the last say. I trust God." God will always be faithful to guard that little spark of faith and eventually (not always right away) fan it into a flame of joy and peace. Remember, what makes the heart of almighty God happy includes doing good for you and me.

So, as I'm facing a situation of anxiety, I admit that I'm helpless. God is all-sufficient, so I call to mind a promise like Isaiah 41:10. ***"fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."* (Isaiah 41:10 ESV)** And I trust that promise at that moment, and that trusting is the casting of my anxiety onto Him. If, by grace, I am able to rest in the promise, the burden is lifted, and I can walk into the scary situation without fear.

God is not a man that He needs to be served, but He is God who always is the giver, and He delights to show His power and His care not by burdening us, but by lifting our burdens. Trust Him for this.